

May 31, 2005

Ms. Nancy Glaser
Director, Environment and Safety Division
Seattle City Light, City of Seattle
P.O. Box 34023
Seattle WA 98124-4023

Dear Ms. Glaser:

Thank you for your public comment letter received on December 17, 2004, regarding Washington State's Water Quality Assessment for 2002/2004. The department received over 45 comment letters during this last review process and is appreciative of the time you took to review and comment on this assessment. We realize that there is an extensive amount of information in the Water Quality Assessment. The scrutiny given by you and other public reviewers has resulted in many changes and corrections that improved the accurateness of the final submittal to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Water Quality Assessment is being submitted to EPA as an "integrated report" to meet the Clean Water Act requirements of sections 305(b) and 303(d). EPA will only take approval action on Category 5 of the assessment, which represents the state's 303(d) list. The Water Quality Assessment can be viewed at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/index.html>.

You are correct that a temperature TMDL study for the Pend Oreille River is currently being conducted. As a result of the TMDL study, natural conditions will be considered in relation to human activities that may cause or contribute to the increased temperatures. If natural conditions are determined to be the cause of the increased temperatures and the human sources are ruled insignificant, the temperature listings would move from Category 5 (the 303(d) list) to Category 1 (meets tested standards). This would formally occur in the next listing cycle (assumed to be 2006) if the TMDL was completed. You are correct that the TMDL would provide the basis and necessary documentation to take the water body off the 303(d) list. Ecology would make the change based on the TMDL.

Thank you again for taking the time to provide comments to Ecology. If you have questions regarding the above responses, or would like further clarification, please feel free to call me at 360-407-6414.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Susan Braley".

Susan Braley
Unit Supervisor
Watershed Management Section